

CLAIMS

1. An ablation device placement spacer for use with a patient undergoing a targeted ablation procedure utilizing elongated ablation devices insertable into treatment zones of the patient, comprising:
 - an elongated spacing member; and,
 - at least one ablation device engaging element positioned on said elongated spacing member, wherein during use an ablation device is releasably engageable with said ablation device engaging element, a spacing portion of said elongated spacing member being spaced from said ablation device engaging element at a desired distance so as to provide the user with an indication of a desired spacing for a subsequent ablation device to be inserted into its respect treatment zone.
2. The ablation device placement spacer of Claim 1, wherein said elongated spacing member, comprises a plurality of spaced openings formed along a side edge thereof, said openings being said at least one ablation device engaging element.
3. The ablation device placement spacer of Claim 1, wherein said elongated spacing member, comprises:
 - a plurality of spaced openings formed along a side edge thereof, said openings being said at least one ablation device engaging element, each of said plurality of spaced openings being defined by relatively large arcuate surfaces for accommodating a relatively large diameter ablation device and at least one progressively smaller arcuate surface formed in said relatively large arcuate surface for accommodating progressively smaller diameter ablation devices.
4. The ablation device placement spacer of Claim 1, wherein said at least one ablation device engaging element comprises a single arcuate engaging element located at an end of said elongated spacing member.
5. The ablation device placement spacer of Claim 1, wherein said at least one ablation device engaging element comprises a single arcuate engaging element located at an end of said elongated spacing member, said single arcuate engaging element providing a snap fit with an ablation device.

6. The ablation device placement spacer of Claim 1, wherein said at least one ablation device engaging element comprises an arcuate element located at an end of said elongated spacing member, said elongated spacing member comprising a plurality of spaced openings formed thereon.
7. The ablation device placement spacer of Claim 1, wherein said at least one ablation device engaging element comprises an arcuate snapping element located at an end of said elongated spacing member, said elongated spacing member comprising a plurality of spaced openings formed thereon.
8. The ablation device placement spacer of Claim 1, wherein said elongated spacing member comprises a plurality of telescoping elements.
9. The ablation device placement spacer of Claim 1, wherein said at least one ablation device engaging element is arcuate to provide a complementary fit with a circular outer surface of said ablation device, wherein said engaging element is capable of being rotated about said ablation device to provide a circular path having a desired radius for placement of a subsequent ablation device.
10. The ablation device placement spacer of Claim 1, wherein said elongated spacing member comprises measuring indicia for indicating the distance from an ablation device to a subsequent ablation device to be inserted.
11. The ablation device placement spacer of Claim 1, wherein said at least one ablation device engaging element is so constructed and arranged to accommodate a cryosurgical probe.
12. A method for providing ablative surgical treatment of a patient, comprising the steps of:
 - a) introducing a first ablation device into a treatment zone of a patient;
 - b) releasably engaging an ablation device placement spacer with said first ablation device, said ablation device placement spacer, comprising:
 - i. an elongated spacing member; and,
 - ii. at least one ablation device engaging element positioned on said elongated spacing member, a spacing portion of said elongated spacing member being spaced from said ablation device engaging element at a desired distance so as to provide the user with an indication of a desired spacing for a subsequent ablation device to be inserted into its respect treatment zone

- c) introducing a subsequent ablation device at said desired distance.
13. The method of Claim 12, wherein said steps of introducing first and subsequent ablation devices are performed in open surgery.
 14. The method of Claim 12, wherein said steps of introducing first and subsequent ablation devices are performed in endoscopic surgery.
 15. The method of Claim 12, wherein said steps of introducing first and subsequent ablation devices are performed in percutaneous surgery.